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Faculty of Law
University of Toronto
Communications Law I
Teaching Materials - 1992

H.N. Janisch

Note:

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for the exclusive use of students
at the Faculty of Law and are not
for publication

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Introductory Note: Week 6 - Private Broadcasting

Section 3(b) of the Broadcasting Act states that "the Canadian broadcasting system should be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians so as to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada." Consider whether these are realistic expectations for the system.

The object of this week's materials is to acquaint you with the major players in Canadian private broadcasting, and the role that they play in the broadcasting system as a whole.

It is reasonable to expect private enterprise, driven as it is by the profit motive, to contribute to "Canadian culture" by investing huge sums to air 'made in Canada' programming which may not deliver as large an audience as less expensive American fare?

On the other hand, given the extraordinary profits made by the private broadcasters what, if any, contribution should they be required to make to the Canadian production industry? What is your opinion of the incentive scheme proposed in Canadian Voices Canadian Choices - A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada? (Week 1)

Ought we to be concerned about the concentration of ownership of broadcast undertakings? Or is a high degree of concentration necessary if the private sector is to make a significant contribution to Canadian programming?

